Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown.

1-10. (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A web server comprising software modules and an expansion module which provides the functions of a programmable logic controller, the server ~~having at least a first software module, the one or more software modules~~ providing through the expansion module a first mechanism for implementing an automation functionality and the server further providing a ~~second~~ mechanism to directly access the real-time communication level of a real-time Ethernet, wherein the expansion module is connected to an input/output module of an automation system.

12. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server comprises a connection to a communication network.

13. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 12, wherein the communication network is the Internet.

14. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein Internet protocols are provided for communication between the software modules and for communication between the software modules and components outside of the web server.

15. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 12, wherein Internet protocols are provided for communication between the software modules and for communication between the software modules and components outside of the web server.

16. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server is adapted for configuration and administration of the software modules.

17. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 12, wherein the web server is adapted for configuration and administration of the software modules.

18. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 14, wherein the web server is adapted for configuration and administration of the software modules.

19. (currently amended) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the expansion ~~first software~~ module comprises a connection to an industrial automation system.

20 - 22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server comprises a connection to the Internet via a firewall.

24. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server is connected via a communication network to a web browser as a control and monitoring system.

25. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 12, wherein the web server is connected via a communication network to a web browser as a control and monitoring system.

26. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 14, wherein the web server is connected via a communication network to a web browser as a control and monitoring system.

27. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server comprises a real-time operating system.

28. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 12, wherein the web server comprises a real-time operating system.

29. (currently amended) An automation system comprising a web server having software modules including an expansion module provides the functions of a programmable logic controller, the expansion module ~~comprising a first mechanism for~~ providing ~~implementing~~ an automation functionality with connection to an input/output module of an automation system and the server further providing ~~a second mechanism to directly~~ direct access to the real-time communication level of a real-time Ethernet.

30. (canceled)

31. (currently amended) The web server of claim 11 wherein the expansion module ~~first mechanism~~ is a controller of components and processes, wherein the web server includes a TCP/IP stack and wherein direct access to the real-time communication level is effected by a direct connection between the TCP/IP stack and an automation device with communication by means of a TCP/IP-based real-time ethernet protocol.

32. (currently amended) The automation system of claim 29 wherein the expansion module ~~first mechanism~~ is a controller of components and processes, wherein the web server includes a TCP/IP stack and wherein direct access to the real-time communication level is effected by a direct connection between the TCP/IP stack and an automation device with communication by means of a TCP/IP-based real-time ethernet protocol.

33. (canceled)